Community Service Week, October 16-22

Community Service Week is being held in honor of Montgomery County's 25th Anniversary of Community Service Day, an annual day of service throughout Montgomery County. The goal of Community Service Week is to increase the culture of serving and giving in the County and to engage new people in service and recognize those who are already serving while meeting needs in our community. Our goal this year is to engage 25,000 volunteers throughout the week! The week will kick off at the World of Montgomery Festival in Wheaton (October 16) and conclude with a large celebration of service in Downtown Silver Spring (October 22). During the week (October 16-22) there will be service projects and volunteer fairs to engage volunteers throughout Montgomery County.

How to get involved:
o Host a project at your site on October 22nd (or anytime during the week of October 16)
o Invite new volunteers to take part in "regular" opportunities with your organization (with possibly an open house, orientation, or training)
o Share a high-impact/high-need project with us to create a toolkit for to share with volunteer groups to plan on their own.

Once you know what project your group would like to do, go to www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteer and either log-in to your account on our online database and post the opportunity, or click on the Community Service Day link and then click on the link at the top of the page to submit your project idea via our online form! This information will be part of our listing of project and will provide a platform for you to track volunteer sign-ups as well as for us to direct volunteers to your open opportunities for the week.

Volunteer "Census": We are trying to capture a snapshot of volunteering in Montgomery County by measuring the impact of volunteers during the week of October 16-22. We will be sending out a survey to all agencies registered with us asking about the impact volunteers have on your organization during that week. So far, we are looking to measure the number of volunteers, hours contributed by volunteers, and type of work volunteers are doing. We would like to take the measures a step further and measure how their work is making an impact on your clients and are wondering what you currently measure or would like to measure that could provide this information.

Pledge 25: In honor of the 25th anniversary of Community Service Day, we kicked off the Pledge 25 campaign on the 25th anniversary of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday and asked volunteers to serve 25 hours in and around Montgomery County between January 17th and October 22nd. Volunteers can go to the Montgomery County Volunteer Center's website, www.montgomerycountymd.gov/volunteer, and click on the Pledge 25 link at the top of the page. They can then Pledge 25 by just entering their name and e-mail address. Then, it's out to the community to volunteer! We have a printable tracking tool volunteers can use to help keep track of when they volunteer. When they have completed their 25 hours, they can go back to the website and fill out the completion survey, or we will e-mail it to them in September. We have also kept the system on our online database for people who are still interested in tracking their hours through that system. We also have added an option for organizations to become a "Pledge 25 Reporting Partner" to be able to report their volunteer's hours directly to us. (If your organization would like to take part in Pledge 25 and do not want to have your volunteers have to track their hours in two places, with you and with us, you can have them sign-up on our website, we'll let you know who opted into the program, and you can send us their hours.)